

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

State Dept. review completed

INFORMATION

27578

SECRET

April 13, 1971

6:30 p.m.

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. KISSINGER

FROM: Harold H. Saunders *7/2*ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS
APPLY

SUBJECT: Calcutta Approach from Bengalis

The attached telegram reports that the British Deputy High Commissioner in Calcutta has tentatively set a meeting tomorrow with Awami League representative Tajuddin Ahmed.

The telegram from Calcutta said that the chief political officer from the consulate general would attend the meeting unless otherwise instructed. I called Sisco to express strong reservations about our being represented at such a meeting.

The argument for attending is the simple one of not cutting ourselves off from new leadership.

The argument against attending is that we would appear to be associating with the leaders of an "insurrection" on the soil of India which is openly supporting the resistance and is helping to engineer recognition of an independent Bangla Desh.

Sisco at first was inclined to authorize the contact while making clear that no recognition was implied. However, he seems now to have retreated to a position of instructing the Consul General not to send a representative to tomorrow's meeting. The instruction would also--by my understanding--say that if any such Bengali walks into the Consulate he should be received courteously but with the explicit caveat that he is being received only as a private individual.

If you see a telegram going out on this subject not cleared formally, it is to stop US attendance at a meeting now less than six hours away. It is based on my exchange with Sisco reported above.

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INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE
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SUBJECT: PROPOSED MEETING WITH TAJUDDIN AHMED

1. WE INFORMED BY BRITISH DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSION (UKHC)

THAT AWAMI LEAGUE REPRESENTATIVE CALLED AT UKDHC TODAY WITH
INFORMATION THAT "BANGLA DESH PRIME MINISTER" TAJUDDIN
AHMED EXPECTED
ARRIVE CALCUTTA IMMINENTLY AND WOULD LIKE
MEET WITH BRITISH AND AMERICAN OFFICIALS AT UKDHC AS SOON AS
POSSIBLE AFTER HIS ARRIVAL. REPRESENTATIVE SAID AHMED DID
NOT WISH TO CALL AT BOTH OFFICE BUILDINGS BUT WANTED BRITISH TO
ASK US TO ATTEND. HE ALSO SAID AHMED WOULD BE ACCOMPANIED
BY AT LEAST 2 OTHER "BANGLA DESH MINISTERS" (SEE CALCUTTA 632)
AND MERELY WANTED TO "TALK" TO U.S. AND BRITISH REPRESENTATIVES.

2. BRITISH HAVE TENTATIVELY SET 1000 HOURS APRIL 14 AS TIME
FOR MEETING, ASSUMING AHMED ARRIVES EVENING APRIL 13.
BUT HAVE INDICATED THEY WILLING MEET EARLIER IF NECESSARY.
3. UNLESS INSTRUCTED OTHERWISE, I PLAN SEND CHIEF POLITICAL

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OFFICER (GRIFFIN) TO ATTEND MEETING.

4. WE ALSO INFORMED BY UKDHC THAT AHMED AND OTHER MEMBERS HIS CABINET BEING AFFORDED FULL PROTECTION BY CALCUTTA POLICE COMMISSIONER. AFTER MEETING AT UKDHC, PLAN IS TO TAKE AHMED AND COMPANY TO CONGRES GHAVAN (STATE HEADQUARTERS CONGRES AR), WHERE HE IS TO MEET REPRESENTATIVE OF FOREIGN PRESE CORPS. WE ARE CHECKING WITH PRESS, BUT SO FAR HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO DETERMINE WHETHER ANY OF THEM AWARE OF PROPOSED PRESS CONFERENCE. GP-3.
GORDON

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